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GOVERNOR VISITS CORRECTIONS OFFICERS IN IRAQ

Corrections staff serving in Al Anbar Province, Iraq with the 1-125 Infantry attached to the 2nd Marine Division were paid a visit by Governor Jennifer Granholm recently.

The Governor was in Iraq visiting Michigan soldiers on Thanksgiving. According to the officers, the Governor is the first VIP to visit their camp.

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From left: CPL James Jolley, RUO, Ionia Maximum Correctional Facility; SSG Duane Enderle, RUO, St. Louis Correctional Facility; SFC Nemetz, Department of Human Services employee; Governor Granholm; CPT Anthony Dennis, C/O, Thumb Correctional Facility and SSG Todd Crawford, RUO, St. Louis Correctional Facility in Iraq.

\$155,000 COLLECTED FOR HURRICANE RELIEF

The American Jail Association, the Association of Women Executives in Corrections, the North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents and the American Correctional Association partnered to gather funds for corrections employees hit by the devastating hurricane in the Gulf region.

Money still continues to trickle in but at last count, the total dollars raised by these four associations, their members and their families and friends has exceeded \$155,000.

Seventy-five percent of the funds are earmarked for Louisiana because they were hardest hit with the

remaining 25 percent going to Mississippi. The contributions are for state and local corrections personnel to use to help put their households and their lives back together

Michigan corrections employees contributed over \$75,000 to that total.

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GROUP DONATES GIFTS TO ST. VINCENT CATHOLIC CHARITIES



Lansing's Bureau of Human Resources and Correctional Facilities Administration joined forces to make the holidays brighter for children and families affiliated with St. Vincent Catholic Charities. They purchased nearly 100 gifts for St. Vincent Home for Children which serves nondelinquent children from 32 counties who are wards of the court and Ballentine Stepping Stones which provides transitional housing and specialized counseling and training to 16 homeless single mothers and their children.

From left: Gerri Smith, Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) specialist; Jan Hoag, Office of Training and Recruitment secretary; Yolanda Thomas, Correctional Facilities Administration secretary and Gary Manns, BHR administrator hold some of the toys selected for the children.

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OAKS STAFF VOLUNTEER FOR HURRICANE RELIEF



From left: R.D. Morehouse, electrician; Mike Shaw, food services director; Matthew Freiburger, accounting assistant; C/O Chip Goodspeed and C/O Chris Urban

Oaks Correctional Facility staff participated in several hurricane relief efforts. R.D. Morehouse and Mike Shaw volunteered for three weeks to assist the American Red Cross in Gulf states disaster relief.

Matthew Freiburger, accounting assistant, worked with the Salvation Army for two weeks in Beaumont, Texas assisting in hurricane relief.

C/O Chip Goodspeed and C/O Chris Urban spearheaded a drive to collect and deliver local donations for disaster victims in the Gulf states.

In addition, Everett Kirkeby, food services leader, recently returned from assisting with disaster relief with the U.S. Navy.

F.Y.I.

I heard it through the grapevine

Not only are those the words to a popular 1960s song made famous by Motown legend Marvin Gaye and later by a bunch of dancing raisins, the grapevine is a way of life for some folks. You know who they are; the nosy neighbor or annoying relative always ready to bad mouth someone or something. Or, maybe it's the person in the next cubicle or the one you run into at shift change every day. You can pretty much guarantee that they're going to have some gossip. They thrive on innuendo. The facts don't matter as much as the thrill of telling the tale and seeing your reaction.

Those people are gossips. They love to start things because it makes them feel important, but what about the rest of us? What do we do with those grapevine stories that we hear on a regular basis? It's called the grapevine for a reason. Originating in the 1800s from the expression grapevine telegraph, like the telegraph, it's capable of transmitting vital messages quickly over distance, but the twisted stems of the vine cause the facts to be garbled and the truth skewed.



Besides, what can it hurt to listen? It's just talk and you don't really believe it anyway. At best, the stories are simply entertaining. At worst, they are malicious and dangerous, destroying morale, diminishing team spirit and tarnishing reputations.

We're not talking about issues affecting the safety and security of staff, prisoners or a facility. If it's a security or policy issue, go directly to management and keep going to management until someone listens to you. That's not spreading gossip, that's doing your job and it's your responsibility.

We're talking about the everyday, routine stories. The kind that seem to make some sense and, well, *they* heard it from a reliable source, so you start to wonder.

It would be ideal if management could share everything with staff but often rumors sprout up without warning confounding actual attempts at communication. If, however, a story has a basis in fact; there may be legal ramifications, union agreements or security issues that have to take precedence over your right to know at the moment.

Communication is critical both up and down the chain of command and when the topic is our job; we want to know sooner rather than later. However, sometimes showing some maturity and patience can be a prudent move. Decide if the information will help you to do your job today or tomorrow or if your need to know is just based on idle curiosity, and then act accordingly.

Management can help choke off rumors by fostering open communications. If you're a supervisor, you can start by making sure you are sharing information with your staff. If you have credible facts that can help staff understand upcoming changes, use good judgment to relay that information. It may not help them type up their daily reports but it might help them to understand the big picture.

In addition, make sure every staff person has access to the department newsletter and appropriate communications from the Director's office. Your team should feel comfortable coming to you for answers to their questions.

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These are critical issues. Adequate communications with supervisors or direct reports are essential when it comes to our livelihood, but there can be another concern. What if it's not about a work incident? What if it's personal gossip about a co-worker, supervisor or their family? Does it harm your job performance or is it detrimental to the operation of the department? After all, it's just talk.

Let's face it. We are a society of busybodies. Look at the success of reality TV. We like to peek into other people's lives even if it's just for an hour a week. We like to know that everyone has troubles, even people who seem to have it all. That's what makes it so compelling.

Besides the obvious time and attention that gossip takes away from daily responsibilities, the answer boils down to respect; respect for your co-workers, your profession and yourself. You rely on your colleagues for assistance with your work and sometimes for your personal safety. Are you fostering a productive atmosphere or has teamwork and cooperation been undermined by vindictive or simply ill-mannered behavior?

Spreading gossip could also affect your chances for promotion if you can't be trusted with critical and confidential communications. Will your supervisor pass on information necessary to develop your career, or does management view you as more of a security risk than a candidate for advancement? Are you trustworthy or can you be counted on to dish about the latest hearsay? Co-workers need to believe that they can look to you for help and support. To move up, you must gain respect and that requires earning trust.

Look at it from a strictly selfish point of view, what if the next time the rumor mill cranks into high gear, the focus is on you or someone you care about.

No group of people can band together faster to help one of their own or someone in need. In just 72 hours Michigan's corrections employees raised nearly \$50,000 to help fellow corrections workers hit by Hurricane Katrina, an incredible feat. Why are we so quick to help someone in need yet so willing to do the worst by a co-worker by perpetuating a rumor?

Are you making your workplace a more supportive and productive environment or is someone dreading their job today because of you?

Maybe it's time you took control of your personal communications. Go to the appropriate manager for answers. Protect your credibility by maintaining your own ethical standards for sharing information.

The grapevine song goes on to say *believe half of what you see and none of what you hear*. While that may be a little extreme, the point is that things are not always as they appear and speculation does not lessen the unknown.

Are you personally going to stop all rumors? Of course not, but if you could put a stop to just one and if each of the department's 17,000 employees refused to repeat one, that would be something to talk about.

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**What if it's
personal
gossip
about a
co-worker,
supervisor
or their
family?**

RUO LUPI SAVES LIFE



Lakeland Correctional Facility RUO Jean Lupi recently received a letter of commendation from Captain Greg Curtis for her efforts during an incident in her housing unit. After observing a prisoner choking on food, RUO Lupi immediately performed the Heimlich maneuver and dislodged the item. After the airway was cleared, the prisoner was taken to Health Services where he recovered without incident.

“RUO Lupi is an excellent employee who displays teamwork and is dedicated to her job,” said Captain Curtis.

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Ionia nurse travels to Guatemala on nursing mission of mercy



R.N. Anne Maroulis with a local child

In October, R.N. Anne Maroulis, day shift nurse at the Ionia Maximum Correctional Facility (ICF) traveled to South America on a medical mission of mercy.

The trip was an opportunity for her to use her nursing skills to help people in a

third world nation. She visited clinics that provided the only medical treatment facilities available to the people living in the rural mountainous area.

During the day, she and her group traveled to the outpost

medical facilities. The roads were sometimes impassable due to the recent rains and mud slides, which plagued the countryside.

The local people came on foot, traveling to the clinics from miles away for any medical treatment they could receive including vitamins and nutritional items. They relied on word of mouth to let others know that the clinic had medical staff available.

A 13-year-old girl, arrived with a 13-month-old boy and a two-and-a-half-year-old girl, looking for nutritional items for her children. The little boy could hardly hold up his head up from lack of nutrition. She had been feeding him

coffee, the only thing she had.

Many of the medical supplies available were those the group had brought with them or had been donated.

All medical personnel volunteered their time as well as paid for their trip to the region.

“The international experience R.N. Maroulis brings back with her to the ICF staff will be invaluable,” said Warden Willie Smith. “R.N. Maroulis truly exemplifies the excellence within our staff.”

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Corrections Officer Brady Hull receives Meritorious Service Award



RUO Quentin Higbie and C/O Brady Hull

Regional Prison Administrator Ray Wolfe visited Pine River Correctional Facility to present C/O Brady Hull with the Department's Meritorious Service Award.

C/O Hull was nominated and selected to receive the award for his conduct during a prisoner funeral visit earlier this year.

While at the funeral home C/O Hull's partner, RUO Quentin Higbie, suffered a severe seizure and fell to the floor.

Because of C/O Hull's quick action, emergency assistance was summoned for his partner and the prisoner was allowed to complete his funeral visit.

"C/O Hull displayed extreme professionalism while maintaining the integrity of security and safety for RUO Higbie and the prisoner," said Warden Percy Conerly.

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OFFICERS ASSIST INJURED HUNTER

ARUS Damon Mallek, ARUS Greg Deatsman, ARUS Scott Yokom and ADW Gary Ball provided assistance to a hunter who had been accidentally shot while hunting on state land across from the Riverside Correctional Facility.

The officers were on their way home from work driving in separate vehicles down Riverside Drive.

The injured hunter flagged down ARUS Mallek and then collapsed at the side of the road.

ADW Ball, ARUS Deatsman and ARUS Yokom then stopped to provide assistance.

ADW Ball called for help and assisted Mallek with first aid to the hunter. Yokom and Deatsman secured the hunter's

shotgun and located identification in the man's tote bag.

"They never hesitated to provide assistance to a citizen and reacted as well-trained corrections professionals," said Warden Carmen Palmer.

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PUGSLEY STAFF ADOPT FAMILIES



For the fifth year, staff at Puglsey Correctional Facility opened their hearts to help area families at Christmas time. This year staff adopted two families and purchased 130 presents. The gifts were delivered to the local Salvation Army where they were picked up by the families in need.

“It never ceases to amaze me as to how generous the staff at MPF are during the holiday season,” said Warden Phillips.

From left: Wendy Bouwkamp, cashier; Sandra Simon, business office secretary; Sue Ellen Walter, procurement tech; Marlene Ford, departmental tech; Brenda Rohn, accounting assistant; Deb Ausdemore, departmental tech; Ann Morin, PMA and C/O Fred Raby

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Toys for Tots receive cash

St. Louis and Mid-Michigan correctional facilities donated \$533 from their casual-day collections for Toys for Tots in Gratiot County. The Toys for Tots program provides gifts at holiday time for deserving children who might not otherwise receive a toy.

MCA WINTER MINI-CONFERENCE IS JANUARY 19, 2006

The Michigan Corrections Association's 2006 Winter Mini-Conference, *Terrorism in Prisons and Jails*, is scheduled for January 19, 2006 at the Michigan State Police Training Academy, 7426 N. Canal Road in Lansing, (517) 322-1200. Seven hours of training credit has been approved for employees attending the conference.

Employees who are approved to attend will be considered to be working and not on administrative leave. However, due to the continuing budget constraints facing state government, reimbursement will not be provided for registration or travel expenses nor is the use of state vehicles permitted.

The cost of the conference is \$35 for MCA members, \$45 for nonmembers and \$55 for a combined conference and MCA membership. Conference cost includes attendance, continental breakfast and lunch. Mail registration to P.O. Box 12021, Lansing, MI 48901-2021.

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BLOOD DRIVE SAVES LIVES

As you make your gift list this holiday season, please consider a very special gift, the gift of life. The need for blood never takes a holiday, but fewer people donate this time of year, so the pint of blood you give during the holiday season is especially precious. All it takes is an hour of your time—an hour that could mean all the time in the world to someone else.

Keith Rubley, Accounting Manager, Muskegon Correctional Facility chose to share his story with his fellow corrections staff.

In August of 1999, I was diagnosed with small cell lung cancer. During the last week of October 1999, I was getting an extremely aggressive treatment of chemotherapy along with twice daily dosages of radiation. I was probably as close to death during that week than at any other time during my treatment. Because of the effects from this treatment, I was extremely weak with depleted red and white blood cells. Had it not been for blood transfusions that I received during that time, there's a possibility that I might not be here today.

In September of 2000, I started working for the MDOC. In October of this year my oncologist gave me a clean bill of health. Since it had been more than five years since my last treatment, the Red Cross allowed me to give blood. I gave this past October and plan on giving as often and as long as I can to return the favor someone did for me.

Don't forget about the special State Employee Blood Challenge incentives:

After your second donation, you will receive an insignia baseball cap.

Each quarter during the State Employee Blood Challenge, all state employees that present to donate during that quarter will be entered into a drawing. The first quarter, November 1, 2005 – January 31, 2006, drawing is a Grand Traverse Resort getaway. Visit www.michigan.gov/bloodchallenge for more details.

In addition, all state employees that present to donate three or more times during the program are entered into a drawing for an overnight stay for two at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island.

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Holiday Stories

Be sure to send in photos and information from your work location's holiday charity giving event for the next issue of FYI. E-mail your stories and photos to madziagl@michigan.gov.

